

Departmental Employee Recognition Program Guidelines

■ Purpose of Employee reward and recognition programs

The purpose of the employee reward and recognition program is to encourage employee excellence and dedication and show employees that they are valued.

For an Employee Recognition Program to work, it must be custom-made to fit your department's goals, objectives and, perhaps most importantly, your employees.

The Departmental Employee Recognition Program Guideline is intended to provide a foundation on which to build new departmental programs and serve as a tool to help align existing departmental programs to the state-wide program.

■ Structure of Departmental Employee Recognition Programs

Employee recognition programs can take many forms. One of the benefits of an employee recognition program is that there is an unlimited number of ways to show employees they are a valuable part of the organization. The key to an effective program is finding those methods that appeal to employees within your charge.

■ Selection Committee

- Each department will assemble a "Nomination Selection Committee." The committee will be responsible for determining which nominee(s) will receive recognition at the statewide ceremony with exception of the Team of the Year nominees which will be reviewed and selected by the Employee Recognition Committee.
- The committee will include the Department Director, the Department Employee Recognition Coordinator, and any other employees appointed at the discretion of the Department Director.

■ Review and Selection

- The committee's review and selection process will be based upon the submitted nomination forms and the applicable criteria for each award category as described in attachments to this procedure. It is the responsibility of the department's committee to verify information contained in the nomination documents.

- Committee selections will be forwarded to the Department of Personnel Employee Recognition Manager by the first business day of April of each calendar year.

■ Required Agency Documentation/Records

- Each agency of the Executive Branch of government will complete a Department Plan for Employee Recognition form and submit to the Department of Personnel, detailing the program they intend to use throughout the year in conjunction with the statewide program.
- The submission form includes:
 - Training Activities
 - Recognition Activities
- Each agency will complete quarterly and annual reports of actual reward and recognition provided to their respective employees using the Department Plan for Employee Recognition Quarterly/Annual Report form. These records are subject to review by IDOP and/or the Governor upon request.
- Appropriate documentation to support awards shall be maintained by each department as a permanent record. Examples of such documentation may include a copy of the award letter, a copy of the nomination form and supporting documentation, agendas, programs, etc...
- It is important to maintain documentation of your department's employee recognition activities. The records will serve as a valuable tool to aid in the evaluation of the effectiveness of your departmental program.
- In addition, the Department of Personnel may request copies of your program documentation when evaluating the statewide system.

■ Program Types (when employee recognition is warranted)

Departments can run several concurrent employee recognition programs. Programs may include, but are not limited to:

- **Length of Service**
 - A program to focus attention on tenure with the department and/or the State of Iowa.
- **Extra Job Performance (EJP)**
 - This type of program may focus on one time achievement and/or sustained performance over a period of time.

- ***Noteworthy performance*** – may focus on identifying a particular type of exemplary or noteworthy performance. Usually the performance to be recognized varies with the needs of individual departments. This may include solid participation or leadership in a team environment.
 - ***Special project completion*** – may focus on timely and accurate completion of a special project or assignment.
 - ***Volunteerism*** or extra effort for charitable organizations.
 - ***Exemplary customer service.***
 - ***Suggestions or improvements*** resulting in improved customer service, reduced costs or increased efficiency.
 - ***Completion of additional tasks*** outside of the employee's department which serve as a benefit to other departments, state government or the citizens of Iowa.
 - ***Exceeding established performance*** or service goals.
- **Peer Recognition**
 - Providing the opportunity and means for employees to recognize and/or reward coworkers or suggest recognition for coworkers.
- **Employee or Leader of the Month/Quarter**
 - Employees who have shown exemplary performance and/or leadership characteristics.
- **Team of the Month/Quarter**
 - Teams that have completed a project or mission which:
 - ***Improved the effectiveness or efficiency*** of processes within the department or Iowa State Government, or
 - ***Reduced costs***, or
 - ***Improved customer service***, or
 - ***Assisted the department or Iowa State Government*** in meeting established goals.

NOTE: Departments should require quantifiable evidence of team accomplishments.
- **Badge of Courage Award for employees who have:**
 - ***Risked personal health or well being*** to provide service to the citizens of Iowa in an area or areas not included in his/her job responsibilities, or
 - ***Performed an unselfish act of heroism*** while providing service to the citizens of Iowa in an area or areas not included in his/her job responsibilities, or
 - ***Sustained serious injury or death*** while following safe operating procedures in the line of duty, or
- **Employee Volunteer of the Month/Quarter Award for employees who:**

- *Consistently contribute personal time and/or services* to nonprofit or charitable organizations.
- **Achievement Awards** may focus on employees who have:
 - *Recently been hired* by your department - i.e. welcome.
 - *Recently completed their probationary period.*
 - *Consistently demonstrated a positive attitude* toward coworkers, customers, clients, etc...
 - *Worked toward self-improvement* or aided in the improvement of coworkers.
 - *Met milestones* established by the department in attendance.
 - *Performed notable deeds* for coworkers or the citizens of Iowa.

■ Types of Recognition

■ No cost

- **Verbal:**
 - Face-to-face appreciation (thanks) or words of encouragement
 - Informal or formal public appreciation (staff meetings, etc...)
 - Take a few moments to speak to the employee and get to know on a more personal level
 - Written and/or documented acknowledgement
 - Write and send a letter and add to personnel file
 - Place a brief note (Post-it™) on employee's desk or computer monitor
 - Acknowledge the employee in department newsletter or bulletin
 - Request a note to the employee from the Office of the Governor and Lt. Governor

NOTE: Document all forms of recognition, place in employees personnel file, and include in performance review

- **Perks:**
 - Name a day for an employee
 - Temporarily name a conference room after the employee
 - Provide a reserved parking space
 - Encourage/allow attendance to special events, training opportunities, etc...
 - Allow the employee to spend a day or coffee break time with the Department Director
 - Allow a day or other appropriate time period of casual attire
 - Give the employee a temporary title promotion (can be a fun title)
 - Assign Team Leader responsibilities (if applicable to employee)

- Assign additional tasks in an area the employee particularly enjoys
- ***Electronic:***
 - Leave the employee a voice mail praising them and/or their performance
 - Send an e-mail to the employee or all employees
 - Acknowledge the employee on the department's web-site
- ***In-direct:***
 - Take action on employee idea or suggestion
 - Hold regularly scheduled staff meetings to keep all employees informed and let them know they are an important part of the organization
- **Low Cost**
 - Supervisor/Manager wash employees car
 - Pack/buy lunch for the employee
 - Design and implement a "You were Mentioned" award for occasions when an employee's performance is praised by a coworker
 - Design and implement a "Caught You" award to distribute to employees who are caught in the act of "doing something right."
 - Purchase a "traveling trophy" to rotate among performing employees
 - Issue certificates for achievement, length-of-service, etc...
 - Send an employee balloons or flowers (may also be "high" cost)
 - Hold a special celebration such as an ice cream social, pop-suckle day, etc...
 - Arrange for a photo with the Governor
 - Plan a lunch with the Department Director or the employee's supervisor or manager
 - Provide pens, pencils, mugs, etc... (may be personalized with message)
- **High Cost (potentially)**
 - Balloons or flowers
 - Special celebrations
 - Exceptional duty pay
 - Lunch with the Department Director or the employee's supervisor or manager
 - Plaques
 - Pens, pencils, mugs, jackets, personalized items